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SUBJECT: JORDAN. SPECIAL MEDIA REACTION ON DISCUSSIONS
BETWEEN GOJ AND U.S ON POSSIBLE MEETING BETWEEN
PRESIDENT BUSH AND KING ABDULLAH II

SUMMARY

Following is a special media reaction on local media coverage of discussions between the GOJ and the U.S. regarding a possible meeting between President Bush and King Abdullah II and possible guarantees on the Palestinian-Israeli issue.

NEWS REPORTS

-- source: Al-Rai April 29, 2004, p.1

Headline: Bush studies giving written guarantees to the King regarding final solution issues.

Washington - Reuters - After his latest strong statement in support of Israel, President George Bush studies giving written guarantees to His Majesty King Abdullah that the issues of Jewish settlements and Palestinian refugees will be resolved through negotiations.

Negotiations are still underway between the two sides to define a date for His Majesty's visit to the U.S. American and diplomatic sources said on Tuesday that such guarantees from the President would help repair diplomatic relations between the U.S. and its Arab allies.

Bush had unleashed international anger on April 14 by acknowledging that Israel has the right to keep some Jewish settlements in the West Bank, which have been built on territory seized by war.

Bush followed that by approving Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's plan to withdraw from the Gaza strip and ruling out any Palestinian right of return to what has now become Israel.

Secretary of State Colin Powell affirmed to Minister

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of Foreign Affairs Marwan Mu'asher that Bush is not imposing conditions for a final peace settlement.

Powell stressed this point on Tuesday evening in a celebration of the creation of Israel. Powell said to a gathering of Israelis, American Jews, and high-ranking American officials: "At the end of the day, the two sides will have to agree mutually to the terms of the final settlement."

Saudi Ambassador to the United States Prince Bandar Bin Sultan said that the White House had informed him that: "All issues concerning the final solution between Palestinians and Israelis must stay as they are --as issues for a final solution and they must be negotiated between the parties concerned."

A Jordanian official said that His Majesty the King would use his meeting with Bush to "request an explanation" about the status of the settlements and Palestinian refugees.

In a gesture of goodwill, the White House is studying the possibility of giving him these guarantees in writing, but sources in the American administration said that a final decision has not been reached in this regard. Jordan fears that denying the Palestinian right of return would pave the way to their final assimilation in Arab countries.

-- Source: Al-Dustour April 29, 2004, p.1

Headline: Bush will give the King written guarantees on the settlements and refugees.

Amman-Al-Dustour- Maher Abou Teir- Al-Dustour learned from an informed source at the Royal Court that the American - Jordanian contacts are still ongoing to set a date for His Majesty King Abdullah's visit to the United States, and these contacts focus on the date and agenda of the meeting. The contacts will continue for the coming few days.

According to political sources, the American president, George Bush, is thinking of giving guarantees to Jordan, affirming that the US does not prejudge the outcome of the possible Israeli-Palestinian negotiations.

AFP quoted American officials as saying that the American President George Bush will give written guarantees to King Abdullah that the issues of Jewish settlements and Palestinian refugees will be solved through negotiations. The French agency also pointed out that George Bush and King Abdullah are planning on exchanging letters that clarify the current situation, pointing out that according to documents being prepared by Jordanian and American diplomats, there will be written documents to President Bush reemphasizing Jordan's support for the Palestinians' peace efforts as opposed to Israel's unilateral plan to pull out from the Gaza Strip.

-- Source: Al-Arab Al-Yawm April 29, 2004, p.1

Headline: American guarantees to Jordan on the final solution issues; King to Qurei': Any solution without the Palestinians will not succeed

Ongoing diplomatic contacts in preparation for the Jordanian-American summit, which was postponed, made remarkable progress yesterday when an announcement was made by U.S. officials to AFP that the President of United States of America Mr. George W. Bush is planning to give written guarantees to His Majesty King Abdullah II in their meeting which is expected to be on May 6, 2004 to the effect that the U.S. will not prejudge the results of the final solution negotiations between the Palestinians and Israel, and that U.S. is committed to the roadmap.

This change in the American position fulfills what His Majesty had requested from the White House and had discussed again yesterday with Palestinian Prime Minister Ahmad Qurei'. His Majesty reaffirmed that the final solution for the Palestinian conflict should be dealt with by the parties concerned, and any solution should be done by agreement between these parties.

His Majesty also said that he would soon make contacts and talks to ensure that the conflict is dealt with and resolved by the parties concerned, and that " Any unilateral solutions that exclude the Palestinians are bound to fail".

The King's assertion of Jordan's constant position regarding final status issues is what prompted the American official to admit to AFP that Jordan is determined to get written guarantees from President Bush, indicating that these guarantees will be given in the form of letters or explanatory notes. The official also said that His Majesty and U.S. President will exchange letters which clarify the present situation and how things will turn out in the future.

On the other hand His Majesty King Abdullah II will present written documents to U.S. assuring once again Jordan's support for the reform efforts of the Palestinians.

Regarding the details of the American statement the American official said that it would reaffirm the U.S. commitment to the Road Map, which was prepared by the Quartet and which calls for the creation of an independent Palestinian State by 2005. High-ranking official sources affirmed to Al-Arab Al-Yawm that contacts with the American side are underway, but refused to disclose any details except for confirming the truth of the news agencies' reports attributed to American officials.

EDITORIAL COMMENTARY

-- Source: Al-Rai April 29, 2004, p.3

Headline: Jordan seeks American guarantees concerning the frame of reference of peace and to keep the issues of the final solution as the prerogative of the parties concerned.

Commentary by: Faisal Malkawi

Consultations are still underway between Jordan and the U.S. administration regarding the forthcoming visit by His Majesty King Abdullah II to the U.S. and his meeting with U.S. President George Bush.

These contacts started immediately after the King postponed his meeting with the American President, which was scheduled for April 21 to give more time for consultations with the U.S. administration in order to develop a common base that would contribute to the success of His Majesty's visit.

The repercussions that preceded and accompanied the last visit, once they became clear, namely, the state of confusion caused by the American position regarding the peace process, the effect on the Palestinian situation produced by the U.S. President's statement with Ariel Sharon, and the general conditions in the region, all of which are equally important, led to His Majesty's return from the U.S. and to the postponement of his meeting with the U.S. President, according to Jordanian officials after His Majesty's return.

These contacts have one fundamental purpose, which is to make His Majesty's next visit to the U.S. successful, but through the achievement of tangible steps to move the peace process forward, away from misinterpretations of what really happened.

Even if there were differences of positions between Jordan and the U.S. administration regarding important issues on which Jordan has taken a position on principle, such as the Palestinian question, yet all indications affirm two undeniable facts that are not subject to misinterpretation: The first is that Jordan-U.S. bilateral relations are important in many ways, and the second is the importance of the American position that is now needed to advance peace efforts in the region, towards their desired objective, in accordance with the Madrid process, international resolutions, and the Road Map.

Jordan's request for clarification of the American position, which was done through these contacts and consultations, and which was guaranteed by the continued presence of Dr. Marwan Mu'asher in the U.S. on the instructions of His Majesty the King were all based on a clear Jordanian position of principle, the elements of which appeared in His Majesty's letter to the U.S. President on the means to end the Israeli Palestinian conflict and consolidate stability in the region.

His Majesty pointed out that Jordan's strong support of the U.S. President's vision is based on the creation of two states to end the Israeli Palestinian conflict, and stressed that this is the only acceptable solution that would guarantee stability in the region and achieve security and prosperity for its people.

His Majesty also stressed that the Israeli withdrawal from Gaza should be part of the Road Map, not an alternative to it.

These elements derive from the details of the Jordanian position, that the issues of the final peaceful solution such as the right of return, borders, settlements, and the Palestinian state are the right of the parties concerned alone, to be negotiated in accordance with the international references and resolutions, as well as the Arab initiative, all of which is included in the road map.

These are what observers call the "guarantees requested by Jordan" and the references to which all parties must return in order to eliminate the state of confusion which was caused by the American President's statement. It was this that made Jordan feel the need for more dialogue with Washington to reach a clear position acceptable to all parties, in order to make the next visit a success.

Analysts feel that the reassertion by Bush and his Secretary of State Powell in public statements to the

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media that all final solution issues are the prerogative of the parties concerned to negotiate alone, and that the U.S. would not prejudice these negotiations, is a positive sign towards a commitment to the vision of the two state solution, which was announced by the U.S. President.

